



U.S. Department of Justice

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September 29, 2010

PRESS RELEASE

Richard S. Hartunian, United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York, Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, and John F. Pikus, Special Agent in Charge of the Albany Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced that the federal grand jury in Albany returned a two count Indictment today charging Keith Ronald Hancock, Jr. with violating the civil rights of an inmate while working as a Corrections Officer at the Rensselaer County Correctional Facility ("RCCF"), and making false statements to the FBI regarding the incident.

The Indictment charges that, on or about January 18, 2009, Hancock, now age 37, of Cohoes, while employed as a correctional officer at the RCCF in Troy, New York and acting under color of the laws of the State of New York, knowingly and wilfully physically struck and assaulted an inmate housed at the RCCF, resulting in bodily injury to the inmate, and thereby willfully depriving the inmate of a right preserved and protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States, namely, the right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment. The Indictment also charges that Hancock knowingly and willfully made a materially false statement to the FBI during an investigation of the January 2009 incident, in that the defendant allegedly stated in substance that he had heard through the grapevine that he punched someone, but that it did not happen, and that he was threatened by the inmate walking down the hallway and did what he had to do to protect himself,

whereas, as defendant then and there well knew, the defendant, while on duty as a correctional officer, had physically punched and struck an inmate who had not threatened the defendant and he did not have to do so to protect himself.

The criminal civil rights charge carries a maximum statutory penalty of up to ten (10) years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and a period of up to three years supervised release to follow any term of imprisonment. The charge of making a false statement to the FBI carries a maximum statutory penalty of up to five (5) years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and a three year period of supervised release.

The investigation in this matter is being conducted by the Albany Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and is continuing. The case is being prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York and the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

An Indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

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